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TheHighlander

Thursday Jan 15 2026 | Issue 722

INSIDE: FROM MINDEN TO THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS PAGE 7

FREE

Icing the next generation

The Sorensen family – dad David, mom Amanda and kids Daxen, 4 and Evie, 6 – took advantage of a free community skate at S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena in Minden Jan. 11, with the parents using the time to teach their kids how to skate. See more photos on page 13. *Photo by Mike Baker.*

Medical officer: 'concerning flu year'

By Lisa Gervais

Lakelands Public Health declaring Hyland Crest long-term care home in a respiratory outbreak as of last week provided proof of Dr. Thomas Piggott's comments to the last board of health meeting.

On Dec. 17, the medical officer of health said he wanted to highlight "a few things from a respiratory virus standpoint."

He cited influenza, COVID, and RSV (respiratory syncytial virus).

He said vaccines continued to be available and were highly recommended. "Pretty much anyone over six months of age for COVID and influenza and RSV for infants; as well as an expanded older age population, high medical risk factors, and individuals 75 years and older." Piggott also discussed H3N2 influenza A.

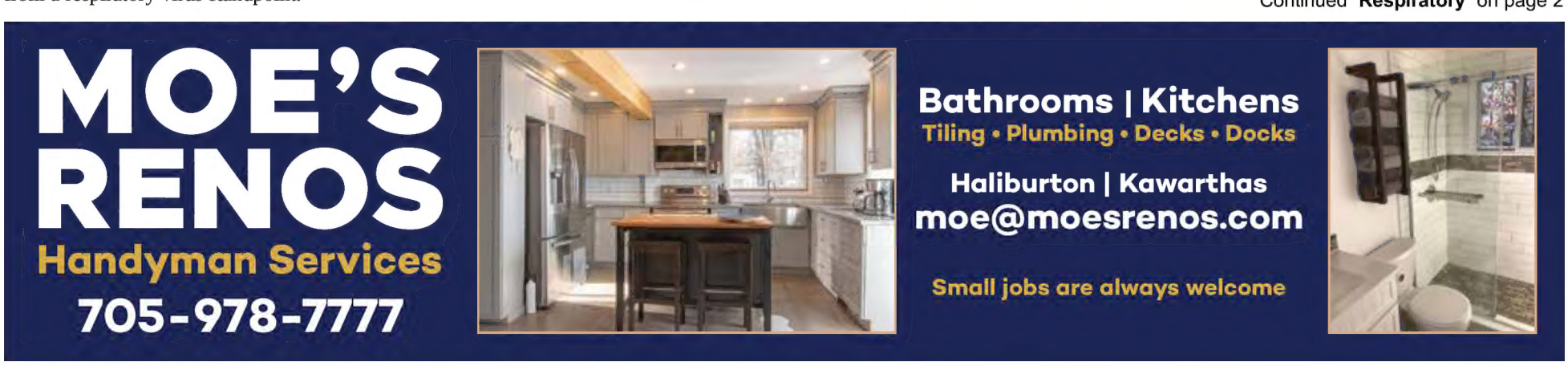
"So, certainly looking to be a concerning flu year," he said.

He added the respiratory virus tracker on their website is now high, "which means we really are in this peak transmission time period so that's really important to be aware of."

Piggott said beyond vaccination, the public has learned from COVID to stay home when sick; wear masks; and spend time in well-ventilated spaces or outdoors.

He noted the deaths of three children in Eastern Ontario in December from influenza, which he termed "very concerning." While he said there are four or five deaths in children every year in Ontario

Continued **'Respiratory'** on page 2



Highlander news

Minden Hills considers organics program

By Lisa Gervais

Decisions, such as whether or not Minden Hills will have an organics program, remain up in the air as council continues to go through its first Strong Mayors budget.

Councillors discussed their 2026 financial plan for a third time Jan. 8. Prior to Christmas, the staff budget prepared with mayor Bob Carter was tabled. Another meeting was held Jan. 6 and it factored into last week's regular council meeting as well.

Councillors have proposed a number of amendments to the mayor's budget. Carter has the right to veto. If he does so, he has to inform councillors in writing with his rationale. After that, council can override him with a two-thirds majority vote. The final day of the process will be Feb. 3.

To date, council is sitting on a 5.29 per cent levy increase. However, factoring in one per cent growth, it is a 4.29 per cent tax rate increase.

Coun. Tammy McKelvey, who has led the majority of council's discussions, said if that is where council lands, she can live with it.

She pointed out an 11 per cent increase in OPP policing billing "was a terrible hit to us, but it wasn't our decision." She laid the blame on the province.

She said with an OPP increase of 1.82 per cent on the levy, the township was really looking at collecting 3.47 per cent from taxpayers. While she said it would be nice to get to zero, that was not realistic. "I'm quite happy with what's happened here. I can live with it and defend it."

Coun. Tammy McKelvey has led much of the budget discussion to date. *File.*

But it may not be the final budget, with power potentially shifting to Carter. In his budget, he proposed an organics program for the Scotch Line landfill that four councillors (McKelvey, Ivan Ingram, Bob Sisson and Shirley Johannessen) want removed. It would cost a total of $39,000.

Manager of waste facilities, Chelsea Cosh, told council the program would help save space in the landfill. She said studies have shown 30-40 per cent of household waste is comprised of organic material. "So, having a program would allow us to divert that material from the landfill and make use of a successful organics program." She said it would require three waste containers (Moloks).

Carter tipped his hand that he might veto this council amendment, commenting, "there is a demand from a certain segment of the public that wants to see this type of environmental leadership."

McKelvey said it's a program she would support, but not for the 2026 budget. "We've got a lot happening up there … a new transfer station. I personally would like to wait until next year."

In addition to amending the mayor's budget to cut some items (a bulldozer at $150,000; a pickup truck at $120,000; and not hiring an additional roads labourer, for example), there were suggested additions. These included putting $50,000 towards a project for the old fire hall downtown.

Some decisions appear to have been made, though, such as dismantling the existing lights from the Riverwalk and investigating other lighting options.

When it comes to roads, the township is looking at doing work on Blairhampton, Nichols, Salerno Lake, Irondale, Sedgewick, and Francis.

Respiratory outbreak at Hyland Crest LTC home

Continued from page 1

due to the flu, these ones have come very early in the season.

"We are watching closely this influenza season and strongly recommend anyone who hasn't been vaccinated to be vaccinated."

Haliburton Highlands Health Services said that on Dec. 28, the health unit had declared Minden's Hyland Crest in a respiratory outbreak. All symptomatic residents had been isolated to their rooms and placed on droplet contact precautions. HHHS said swab results had been delivered confirming Rhinovirus, Influenza A + H3.

"Two residents on the lower level of Hyland Crest have developed mild respiratory symptoms as of today (Jan. 6). Swabs have been collected on new ill residents."

HHHS added, "Hyland Crest staff continue to work diligently to reduce the spread of this infection. Increased Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is being used by staff to reduce the risk of transmission. Essential visitors are asked to always follow appropriate IPAC procedures.

Please be reminded of the importance of hand hygiene. Washing hands thoroughly and/or leveraging HHHS-supplied hand sanitizer helps stop the spread and keeps us all safe.

As always please call the nursing team anytime for an update on your loved one."

The outbreak at Hyland Crest remained in effect as of press time Jan. 14.

Extendicare Haliburton has also had trouble with Influenza A, Rhiovirus and Enterovirus, with an outbreak at that facility declared Dec. 25 and lasting until Jan. 7.

Meanwhile, the board of health next meets virtually on Jan. 21 at 4 p.m.

Dr. Thomas Piggott

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Highlander news

Dysart approves 4.98 per cent tax hike

By Mike Baker

Dysart et al council has supported the township's 2026 budget, carrying a 4.98 per cent increase for local ratepayers. *File.*

It took Dysart et al council just 11 minutes last week to support the township's 2026 budget, with mayor Murray Fearrey saying, "this is pretty well a stand-pat budget," with little-to-no money set aside to expand services this year.

A second draft of the budget was tabled during a Jan. 9 special meeting, with elected officials happy with a 4.98 per cent increase to property taxes. This is down from 5.83 per cent, proposed in the first draft of the budget in December. Treasurer Brayden Robinson noted staff had found more savings in recent weeks, reducing the required tax levy increase by $111,529.

As a result, residential ratepayers can expect to pay an additional $17.54 per $100,000 of their property's assessed value. That equates to a median increase of $40.17 on the year for non-waterfront taxpayers and $71.04 for those with seasonal residences.

"We've not done anything to lessen the services of the municipality, but we've had to cut some projects that would be nice to do, especially roads, because if we did them, we'd just have to borrow the money," Fearrey said.

"We're going to provide the same services that we did last year – we'll get some of the roads done that need to be done in town here, one out on Wenona Lake, and we've got the [three] bridges, which are huge," he added.

The township is slated to spend $3.8 million replacing the Redstone Brook and Barry's Bay bridges and Head Lake Park footbridge this year. A further $1.5 million is being spent resurfacing a dozen roads in the community, including the entirety of the Halbiem Crescent subdivision and portions of Fred Jones Road, Wenona Lake Road, Meadowview Road, Industrial Park Road, Eastern Avenue, Pine Avenue, Humber Avenue, Dome Street, Harmony Road and Mink Road.

The township's operating expenses – things they have to pay for year-over-year that council has little control over, according to Fearrey – are up more than $1 million in 2026, climbing to $17.76 million. Taxpayers will pay approximately $14 million of that, with 76 per cent borne by those with residential properties.

Robinson noted commercial properties would pay an additional $26.01 per $100k of assessment, with industrial owners paying an extra $30.14 per $100k.

In his report to council, Robinson broke down the savings from the December meeting – expected costs for a final cover at the West Guilford and Kennisis landfills, initially projected at $429,243, have come in at $252,743 – a reduction of $176,500. Landfill haulage costs yielded a $46,638 reduction, with another $51,689 saved on the bridges due to a revised repayment plan.

Building and bylaw staff are now projecting an increase of $5,000 in STR revenues – welcome news after council learned last month that program uptake hasn't been as successful as initially projected. The township expected to have 500 STR properties as of the start of 2026, but staff have only registered 250-270, leading to a $110,000 decrease in anticipated revenues.

The biggest increase across the whole budget, Robinson confirmed, was OPP costs, which are up 11 per cent ($244,993). This is a big jump from recent years, with police carrying a 0.5 per cent increase in 2023, 1.4 per cent in 2024 and 3.6 per cent in 2025.

Tightening belts

Fearrey reiterated how difficult it was toeing the line with this budget.

"It would have been nice if we could have done some other things – adding a grader or fixing some of our other issues, but we're just going to have to fix things as we go. That's just what we have to do right now if we're going to be at all reasonable to taxpayers.

"I don't want to leave the next council with a bigger mess than we inherited, so there are some things we need to do [and pay for]… it would have been nice not to have a tax increase, but that day has gone, I'm afraid, for a long time," he said.

The mayor again targeted the provincial and federal governments, saying municipalities need additional sources of revenues to cover costs – especially in the wake of recent provincial governments downloading costs, for things such as social housing, to the local level.

Deputy mayor Walt McKechnie and councillors Barry Boice, Pat Casey and Tammy Donaldson took turns complimenting Fearrey, Robinson and department heads for delivering a trimmed budget - the first since Ontario premier Doug Ford mandated mayors in most municipalities take control of the process.

Fearrey said despite the additional responsibility, which he said he doesn't like, he still worked alongside council to ensure they felt a part of proceedings.

"To me, it was the same process. There's only one way to do a budget and that's with the department heads, staff and council. This didn't change anything for me, I didn't think it needed to happen, but it did. It might work in Toronto, but isn't needed in these rural municipalities," Fearrey said.

Under the new process, Robinson said there is no formal approval mechanism required for the budget, with the process now considered complete.

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Highlander news

Cultural plan to honour Dysart's history

By Mike Baker

Finding more ways to celebrate the community's heritage, history and identity are core themes of a proposed five-year update to the Dysart et al cultural plan, says Erin Lynch, chair of the township's cultural resources committee (CRC).

She told *The Highlander* during a recent interview that she hopes to have the new document ratified by council and officially adopted by spring.

A refreshed plan was presented to council in December. Work has been completed by County-based consultant Heather Reid, who was hired last summer to bring the township's existing plan, adopted in 2012, up to date.

"The original plan was intended to be a 10-year plan, it was never meant as a final document. We've seen a lot of changes in our community in recent years - whether it's the influx of people who have moved up here, we've certainly seen an increase in diversity. So, we have to respond to all of that," Lynch said.

Reid spent months consulting with the public, Lynch said. A targeted survey to local cultural groups drew 59 responses, with a community meeting at the Haliburton School of Art + Design (HSAD) in November providing further opportunity for residents to weigh in.

Keeping with the theme of the original plan, Reid expanded on the document's four original goals – seeing the municipality take a more active role in cultural planning and development; taking steps to build and promote a strong and dynamic cultural sector; finding ways to expand cultural and economic development; and supporting projects that boost local heritage and identity.

Through the first pillar, Reid said one of the main objectives of the update is to improve lines of communication between council and the cultural resources committee, clarifying for community groups how the relationship works so they know who to approach with concerns.

"We also want to educate the community about the CRC and their role, enhancing connections with the hamlets and thinking about policies that make sense for cultural initiatives as this area changes and evolves," Reid said.

Given the changing dynamics of the local population, Reid said there's also a need to expand on cultural offerings. She pointed to events like the Diwali in Haliburton, hosted by Dance Happens Here Haliburton in November, as a perfect example of something new locals can enjoy.

Reid said there's also a desire to strengthen connections with "community linchpins" like HSAD and CanoeFM, while also finding new ways to improve youth engagement and improve the downtown.

On cultural and economic development, Reid said something as simple as utilizing existing GIS infrastructure to populate a virtual map showcasing Dysart's many cultural offerings could go a long way to improving awareness of local events and businesses.

Diving deeper on heritage and identity, Reid said the CRC has supported two important historical projects in recent years – the installation of informative panels at the Eagle Lake beach telling the story of how the hamlet became the rhubarb capital of Ontario, and something similar for Glebe Park celebrating the area's Indigenous history.

"There so much potential for more historical research to be done – some of the topics outlined by the community include logging, Indigenous people, hockey, aggregates, hunting, the Molou Theatre, the lodges of Lake Kashagawigamog, forestry, fishing," Reid said. "This is where we can see an opportunity for so many different groups in our community to get involved and capture these stories."

Dysart's cultural resources committee chair Erin Lynch. *File.*

Mayor Murray Fearrey said he doesn't think the township has done a good enough job of celebrating the community's history.

"We have pieces here and there, but no coordinated effort to fill in the big picture. I think that's something we could focus on, for sure," Fearrey said.

Lynch said the CRC will meet Feb. 12, where it's expected a recommendation will be made for council to support the update. The file will be discussed again by council before being adopted.

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Highlander news

NY baby 'going to have great birthdays'

By Mike Baker

New Years now has an extra special meaning to Noella Floyd-Foulds and her partner, Harley Foulds, who welcomed their daughter, Teresa Mae Floyd Foulds, into the world Jan. 1 – the first baby born in Haliburton County in 2026.

Delivered at their Harcourt home with the help of the Haliburton & Bancroft Midwives, Teresa arrived at 4:41 p.m. weighing a healthy nine-pounds-one-ounce.

Teresa is the couple's fourth child and third to be birthed at home. Floyd-Foulds said the local midwives service went above and beyond to make sure she was informed and comfortable throughout her pregnancy, while responding quickly once it became clear Teresa was on her way.

The family worked with Vanessa Johnson, a locally-rostered midwife, and Stephanie Simon, a locum midwife.

Floyd-Foulds said she had a scheduled appointment at 4:30 p.m. on Jan. 1. It was supposed to be a routine check-up, but with contractions starting late New Year's Eve, she knew Teresa was close.

"When I woke up in the morning, I was still having contractions. I knew I had my appointment that day already, but then they called me to say they had an earlier opening. I was so relieved and just said, 'oh, that's perfect, because I think I'm in actual labour right now,'" Floyd-Foulds said.

Simon was the first to arrive around 3:30 p.m., with Johnson quickly following.

"It was very spring into action, the midwives definitely know what they're doing… they were done and gone by 7 p.m." Floyd-Foulds said. "We've used them for all of our births – they're a great resource, not having many doctors around and not really wanting to travel."

Teresa Foulds, born at 4:41 p.m. on Jan. 1, was the first baby born in 2026 in Haliburton County. *Photo submitted.*

Midwifery services are funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, so families do not pay for care out-of-pocket. Haliburton & Bancroft Midwives are the only care providers in Haliburton and North Hastings counties who provide continuous care and support throughout pregnancy, birth and early parenthood. The group has clinics in Haliburton and Bancroft.

Floyd-Foulds said she connected with the midwives as soon as she found out she was pregnant. Initially, they meet once a month, moving to once every couple weeks at the end of the second trimester. Appointments are weekly for the last six weeks.

With Teresa being Floyd-Foulds biggest baby at birth, she said the labour was brutal – even with nitrous oxide (laughing gas). Despite that, she says she would recommend home births to pregnant women, especially if they utilize the local midwives service.

"I think it's nice to be at home and be in a comfortable space. I've always loved the midwives. They're super reassuring when you're screaming and in your worst of times. They provide great comfort and support," she said.

The midwives conduct home visits every other day for the first 10 days after birth, moving to weekly check-ins for the next six weeks. Parents are also welcome to visit the clinics anytime.

Floyd-Foulds has had three very different experiences with her homebirths – the first, in 2020, was unplanned.

"They showed up and I was 10 centimetres dilated. The midwife ran straight to her car and said we were going to have the baby right now," she said. "The next birth, in 2022, was more planned, except he was three weeks early. They had only dropped off the home birth kit the day before. Teresa was the most planned homebirth."

The family's latest addition is named after Harley's grandmother, Teresa Foulds, who turns 100 on Jan. 31. Asked what it meant to welcome the County's first baby of the new year, Floyd-Foulds said it was exciting.

"I definitely didn't think we'd be the first one, since we had her so late in the day. I'm very happy it ended up this way, I'm sure she's going to have some great birthdays in the future," she said.

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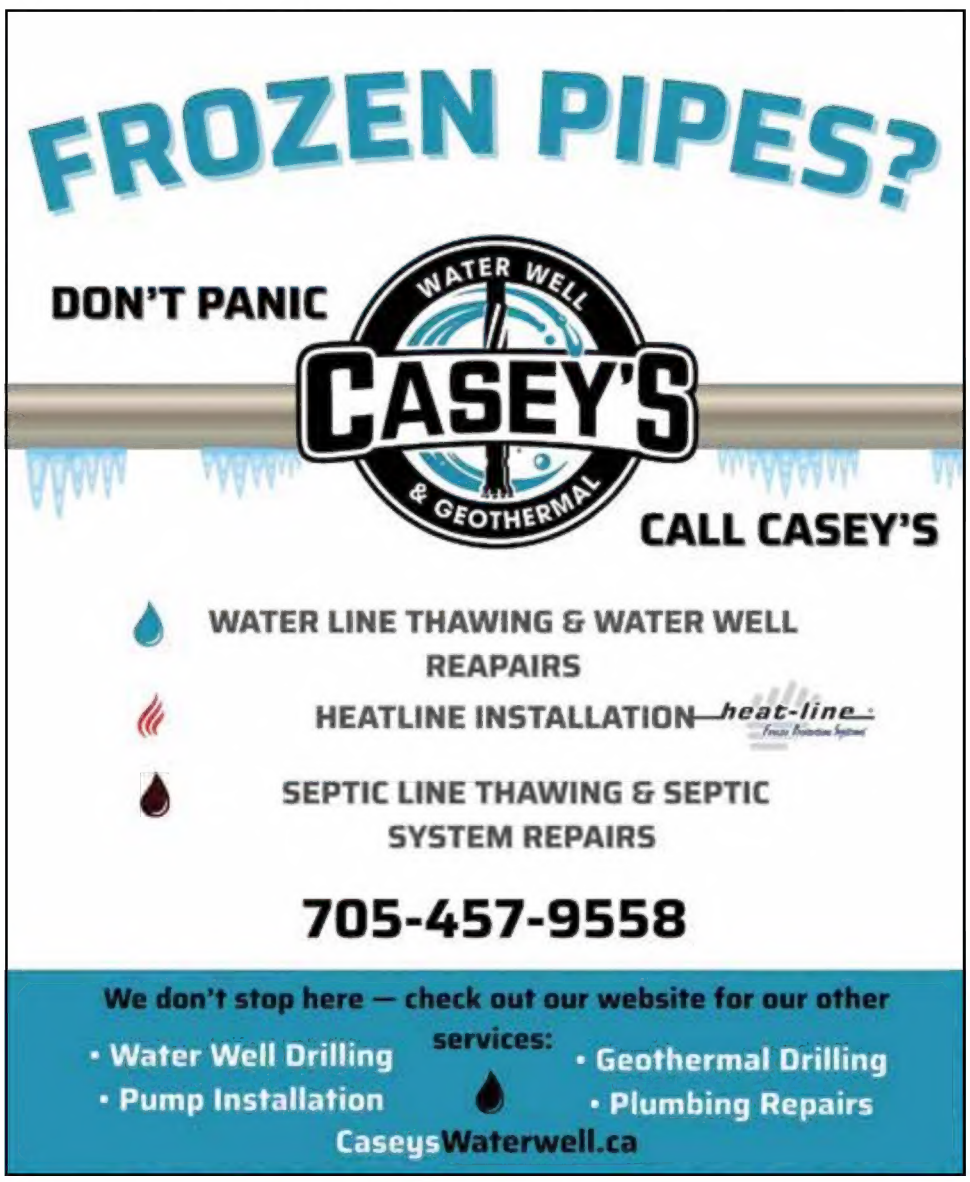

Highlander news

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Haliburton Highlands CHAMBER of COMMERCE

MINDEN HILLS NEWS

The Dawson Hamilton memorial outdoor rink is at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre, at 176 Bobcaygeon Rd. *File.*

Outdoor rink open

The Dawson Hamilton memorial outdoor rink is now open for skating at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre, 176 Bobcaygeon Rd.

The township said there are some rink rules, which include: the ice area is for skating only; no sticks, pucks or other equipment will be permitted; strollers are not allowed on the ice surface; CSA-approved helmets are strongly recommended; skaters are encouraged to skate at a sensible and safe speed in the same direction as other skaters at all times; all participants must be wearing skates while on the ice; speed skating, figure skating, backward skating, participation in horseplay, skating games, and carrying children while on the ice will not be permitted. The township also asks that people not visit parks and outdoor ice rinks if they are feeling unwell.

"The Dawson Hamilton memorial outdoor rink is self-regulated and the Township of Minden Hills is not responsible for any injury, loss or damage caused by the use of the outdoor rink. Use at own risk," the municipality said.

Please note: As of Jan. 8, The Dawson Hamilton Memorial Outdoor rink is temporarily closed due to the milder temperatures.

The Minden Hills Cultural Centre (MHCC) was re-opened on Jan. 14 and the Minden branch of the Haliburton County Library will reopen on Jan. 15 to the public. There is still some construction happening at the facility with the roofing project getting underway next week and the shoring of the retaining wall soon to be completed. Please note that all parking will be available at the facility.

For more information, please visit www.mindenhills.ca for updates.

Merging conservation authorities

Minden Hills coun. Pam Sayne, who sits on the board of the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA), said they are keeping an eye on conservation authority mergers.

In late 2025, the Ontario government announced it would consolidate 36 existing authorities into seven larger, regional bodies under a new provincial agency. It said the move would create efficiencies. However, concerns have been raised about local relevance, different watershed needs, and potential loss of local control over distinct natural areas.

Sayne told a Jan. 8 regular council meeting, "there are a lot of questions about the oversight and good practices that have been done by conservation areas and what the province might be doing here, so we've been paying a lot of attention to that."

She added she had been working with the Kawartha-Haliburton Source Protection Authority on issues to make sure concerns are raised.

She noted this year's ROMA conference is Jan. 18-20 in Toronto.

Source protection appointment

At the meeting, council gave its support to having Jenna Stephens, planning officer, environmental policy for the City of Kawartha Lakes be its representative to the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Committee.

Minden Hills, Dysart et al, Algonquin Highlands, Highlands East and the County are joined on the working group by Trent Lakes, Brock, Scugog and Uxbridge.

The work involves protecting municipal drinking water sources.

(*Minden Hills news compiled by Lisa Gervais*)

First drug bust of 2026 in Haliburton Highlands

By Mike Baker

The Haliburton Highlands OPP has made its first drug bust of the new year, taking approximately $7,000 worth of fentanyl and cocaine out of the local illicit drug supply.

Officers from the detachment's community street crime unit raided a residence on Parkside Street in Minden Jan. 6. According to police, they seized 63.5 grams of fentanyl, nine grams of cocaine, $195 in cash and two shotgun shells.

Two people were arrested at the site and subsequently charged - 69-year-old Vallinda Davis and 46-year-old Jamie Madill, both of Minden. They are facing two counts of possession of a schedule one substance for the purpose of trafficking and possession of proceeds of property obtained by crime under $5,000.

The two have been released and are scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Minden at a later date.

Cst. Rob Adams, with the Highlands detachment, says police are looking for any information about the trafficking of illicit substances in Haliburton County. Anyone with information can contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122, or by contacting Kawartha/Haliburton Crimestoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-8477. Tipsters may be eligible to receive a cash reward up to $2,000.

Haliburton Highlands OPP seized fentanyl, cocaine, cash and ammunition at a Jan. 6 bust in Minden. *Submitted.*

Highlander news

Oaklie Harrison, pictured with her coach Teanna Larmand, will be part of two teams competing at the cheerleading Allstar World Championship in Florida in April. *Photos submitted.*

Minden superstar to compete at worlds

By Mike Baker

Seven-year-old Minden resident Oaklie Harrison is getting ready to take the world by storm as she prepares for her debut at the Allstar World Championship cheerleading competition, being held in Orlando, Florida in April.

A part of U8 'Baby Queen Sharks' and U12 'Dreamy Sharks' squads out of Cheer Sport Sharks in Orillia, Oaklie will be one of only a handful of athletes competing for two teams at the event, said mom Karys Harrison.

She's been an avid cheerleader for five years, joining the Orillia club when she was three. Because of her slight build, Oaklie was named flyer on the U6 'Teenie Boppers' novice team – she's the one routinely lifted into the air, showcasing her acrobatic skills with a series of aerobic moves.

Despite getting involved at such a young age, Oaklie has never shown any fear, Karys said.

"She loves it, absolutely loves it. Being up in the air is her happy place," she said. "She's really committed. We started out with the novice team, with a bit of a lighter schedule, but now she's cheering nine hours per week. We're in Orillia three times a week for this."

Oaklie made the U8 Allstar team ahead of the 2024-25 season and impressed her coaches – so much so that she was invited to be a part of both the U8 and U12 squads this year. The cheer season is a long one, with tryouts beginning in mid-May and team practices starting in June. Competition runs through to late April.

Described as "the pinnacle of the cheerleading season," the Florida event runs April 16-19 and will see Oaklie and her teammates competing against dozens of other squads from across the continent.

They qualified following a strong performance at the Breath of Life Cheer Challenge, held at Guelph University Nov. 30. Both the U8 and U12 teams finished second in their division, earning invitations to the world championships.

Karys said team staff and parents surprised the kids with a video unveiling before the holidays, confirming they'd secured a spot.

"Worlds is their goal, it's what they look forward to, it's one of the main reasons they join an Allstar team," Karys said. "They're very excited – once their names went up on the screen, they couldn't believe it."

In the weeks since, Oaklie has been putting in extra sessions on her home tumbling track. Karys said her daughter has come a long way over the past four years, crediting her progress to the teachings of Cheer Sport Sharks owner Teanna Larmand.

"They have been phenomenal every step of the way, they've become a second family to us. Oaklie hangs out with her cheerleading friends more than her regular school friends," Karys said.

She'll have strong support south of the border – Karys, husband Jack, brother Olsen and sister Ozzie will also be travelling.

Competition is likely to be stiff, Karys admits.

"I expect the teams will be competitive, but we're not going down there expecting them to place first or second… this is all about the experience now, getting to practice at one of the top gyms in the world, performing on such a grand stage. It's a huge deal," Karys said. "Oaklie loves that she gets to be this fierce little girl out of Minden going to worlds."

Due to the high cost of attending, the team is fundraising – anyone interested in supporting the efforts can contact Larmand at orillia@cheersportsharks.com or Harrison at karysk@hotmail.com.

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Audited Circulation 8,871 (Jan 1 - June 30, 2017)
Canadian Media Circulation Audit - Canadian Community Newspapers Association

We acknowledge and appreciate financial assistance from the Government of Canada

New Year's resolutions

By Mike Baker

By Mike Baker

Hands up if, as part of your annual tradition, you ushered in 2026 by setting some new goals for yourself under the guise of a New Year's resolution.

Don't worry, you're not alone. A survey completed in 2024 by Stats Canada showed about half of Canadians (48 to 49 per cent) kick off the new year with plans to make major changes in their lives. That same survey suggested 70-90 per cent abandon their resolutions within a few months, with less than 10 per cent achieving success by year-end.

Some of the more common themes include improving fitness, getting a better handle on finances, quitting smoking, limiting drinking, and making more time for loved ones. Other fun and exciting options include travelling, starting a new hobby, learning new skills, or starting a new relationship.

I used to be a sucker for New Year's resolutions – not content with just one, I'd make a list of three or four things I wanted to change or improve in the coming year.

Things are great at first – I've been a part of that mad January rush at gyms four times in my adulthood. All four times, I'd fallen off the wagon by mid-February.

A few years ago, I committed to learning how to cook nutritious meals at home. Three times a week I'd open a cookbook and pick something I'd never prepared before. Or at least that was the plan. I think I got to page 7 or 8 before literally closing the book on that endeavour.

I'd be really hard on myself when I stumbled – how difficult can it be, really, to stick to a commitment and see it through to completion? Looking at the statistics regarding New Year's resolution falloffs, pretty darn easy, apparently.

On New Year's Eve 2022, my best friend visited from Guelph with his new girlfriend. She was a psych/soc major and, at some point that evening, we started talking about New Year's resolutions. She scoffed, labelling them a waste of time. She took turns asking those of us around the kitchen table how many resolutions we'd actually stuck to. There were awkward glances as, one-by-one, we each bowed out of the argument.

Her goal wasn't to put anyone down; it was to point out why our resolutions often fail – often, the goals are too big, vague, or lack direction. People don't usually map out how they're going to achieve their goal, they jump into the puddle both feet first without boots on. That was her analogy.

For most, resolutions are seen as a fun thing to focus on during that dreary time of year where the nights are long. For others, they do it because they feel pressured by friends, family or societal norms. These are, usually, the folks doomed to fail.

I made several changes to my own life last year – not as part of a resolution kicking off on an arbitrary date, but because I'd finally reached a point in my mind where I wanted something and the reasons were strong enough to keep me on track day-by-day.

We all need something to cling to when the going gets tough, but before long whatever your chosen thing is will become a habit. By that point, it's easy to keep going.

Habit formation can range from a few weeks to a couple of months, with the average for complex changes, such as diet or routine overhaul, taking around 60 days to set in.

So, for those of you who have fallen off the wagon already – or getting close to it – sit down and think about why you're making these changes. Write them down on paper. If they're important enough, come up with a plan that keeps you going during the down days.

But know, bit-by-bit, the more you keep going, the easier things will become. Good luck to all of you trying to be better.

HUMANS OF HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS

Finding Austria in the Highlands

By Susan Tromanhauser

Austria is in the middle of Europe; a country of Alpine landscapes and a rich tradition of hiking and skiing.

Just like Haliburton County.

While many would not equate Haliburton to Austria, Susi Dennis sees similarities. The first half of Dennis' life was spent living a European lifestyle of hiking, swimming, family and friends in Austria. But when she moved to Canada 30 years ago, Dennis found comfort in continuing this lifestyle in the Haliburton region.

Dennis originally came to the Highlands to visit her mother, who, along with her stepfather, immigrated to Toronto and moved to Minden when they purchased a restaurant in Norland. Dennis' plans for a short stay resulted in falling in love; with the area and a man who convinced her to stay.

Once married, Dennis began to acclimatize herself to her new country. Her native tongue is a dialect of German, the official language of Austria, but like most Europeans, she learned English in school and picked up the language in travels across Europe. She soon became fluent by integrating herself into the community.

Dennis landed an administrative position with a local accounting firm, but 12 years ago, the position ended and she found various jobs, from sales clerk to serving. Eventually, she landed at The Country Rose, a flower and garden centre in Haliburton. This was an ideal position for Dennis, melding her service and sales skills learned in Canada with her horticultural skills developed while completing an apprenticeship in Germany in her younger years.

Dennis now lives on Mountain Lake Road outside of Minden, enjoying the scenery of the area. Like many others in retirement, her hobbies are hiking, reading and doing puzzles. Dennis admits she no longer enjoys swimming in the lake after an encounter with a snake, a personal phobia of Dennis'. She has planned a move soon into the village of Haliburton where she can be closer to shops and not as isolated from neighbours. She misses the interaction with customers and is hoping to return to The Country Rose on a part-time basis.

Dennis makes regular visits to her son, who lives in Keswick with his wife. Her mother still resides in the region, now in a retirement home in Haliburton. She visits her home of Austria as often as finances and schedules align. She is hoping for a trip back in the near future to visit her father who is 88 years old. She enjoys visiting

Susi Dennis. *Submitted.*

family and old friends, acknowledging friends from childhood hold a special place.

When she returns to her homeland she is reminded of the contrasts between Austria and Haliburton. Austria has a long tradition of hiking with long trails in all directions and mountain lodges readily available. Both regions have four distinct seasons, but winters in Austria are not as extreme. And summers in Austria do not bring mosquitoes or black flies.

But to Dennis, swatting away a mosquito is worth it to live her life in Haliburton County.

Editorial opinion

LETTER

Shots save lives

Dear editor,

Doug Smith's letter hit a sore point. Going to school in the 1950s, the doctors came in and we got vaccinated for a lot of things. I also remember tuberculosis, sanitariums, polio, iron lungs, now mostly eliminated by medical science. This year, I was vaccinated for COVID-19, Influenza, & RSV. In all the years, I have never had an adverse reaction to a shot.

In 1957, I almost died from Rheumatic Fever, which did a lot of damage to my heart. The doctors felt 45 would be my maximum life expectancy. Thanks to great doctors, medications, and trying to follow advice, I have made it to 78. That said, I always research a medication or shot.

For some people there will be adverse reactions but one must weigh the good with the bad and make a choice. One medication I am currently on can, under certain circumstances, kill me. A chance I am prepared to take.

The only snake oil salesmen are the anti-vaxxers. During COVID, they didn't take the shot, then wound up ill in hospital, tying up space critically ill cancer and heart patients needed, and costing lives.

If someone refuses a vaccine for no viable reason and brings preventable critical illness on themselves, they should be required to wait for treatment, until after other critically ill patients who, through no fault of their own, require timely care and are treated.

Keith W. Stata
Kinmount, ON

We want to hear from you

Send us your opinion on any and all things related to living in the County

editor@thehighlander.ca

Celebrating 25 years

Dear editor,

The Minden Health Care Auxiliary would like to let the community know we celebrated 25 years of service Jan. 7 at the Minden Curling Club.

Eight of our members were awarded their 25-year pins: Lyn Preston, Wynn Taylor, Gail Flook, Irene Alexander, Pearl Cowan, Judith McNeilage, Donna Monk and Maxine Snell. A further 16 people were celebrated for 20 years of service, 12 for 15 years and 11 for five years.

We also had two members, Lyn Preston and Mary Trumbell, receive the Ontario Volunteer Service Award for 2025 and six who will receive the same in 2026: Irene Alexander, Judith McNeilage, Gail Flook, Donna Monk and Winn Taylor and John Fortune.

In the 25 years of existence, our little auxiliary with an average of 30 members each year has raised over $450,000. All this money has been spent in the community supporting the Hyland Crest Long Term Care, HHHS' adult day program, Minden Urgent Care, the hospital when it was in existence and currently the Minden Health Hub.

HHHS board chair David Blodgett was on hand to congratulate the group for their outstanding work.

We are a small but mighty group and always looking for more volunteers. If interested, please contact Brigette Gebauer at bgebauer@hhhs.ca. You can also reach out to our president Gail Simon at gailsimon43@gmail.com

Many organizations in our community only thrive through our volunteers and I highly recommend the rewarding experience you can have with the Minden Health Care Auxiliary.

Cecille Gibbons
Minden

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

Steve Smithson captured the Orion constellation over Fort Irwin during the last full moon

Highlands guild quilting for community

By David Vincent

What comes to mind when you hear the words Haliburton Highlands Quilt Guild?

Perhaps a group of sewers making baby blankets, or larger items to sell at craft shows? What about a group of like-minded residents participating in community action, life-long learning, who are fun, open, welcoming, and with an unlimited willingness to share.

The guild is comprised of 52 people committed to their community, says current president Pat Stiver. They meet monthly at the Stanhope Community Hall, bringing their diverse skills in support of each other and focusing on continuing development.

It was founded in April 1997, in the home of May Bradbury. Marvella Smith became the guild's first president.

Stiver said the guild's sense of community is both local and national. Their giving-back projects range from quilts for fire victims; cancer patients in the community; making pyjamas; and supporting the Quilts for Survivors program for residential school survivors.

In her second term as president, Stiver said she's been a member of the guild since 2006. While she joined out of a want to meet new people, having relocated from the Peterborough area, Stiver said she soon learned the important role the guild played in the community.

A standout moment for her came several years ago when visiting the new home of a local resident who lost everything in a house fire. Hanging on the wall was a quilt donated by the guild – the resident told Stiver it was a reminder of the people and groups that had helped them during their time of need.

Sue Culbert is the group's membership coordinator. She joined in 2023, saying being a guild member means she can challenge herself to continue learning while also giving back to the community.

Co-vice president Carolyn Pawson has been a member for years. At a recent gathering, she was busy preparing donated quilts for shipping to Digby, Nova Scotia, where they would be used by fire victims. She has also been involved with the Quilts for Survivors program. Last year, she and a fellow guild member joined a three-day retreat hosted in Timmins, where they made three quilt covers in three days to send off to people in need.

The Haliburton Highlands Quilt Guild at the Stanhope Community Centre. *Photo by David Vincent.*

The guild is open to everyone – Stiver says people are welcome to come as they are, no experience or sewing machine required. For more information, visit www.haliburtonhighlandsquiltguild.com.

2025 year in review

The Duchenes.

PM Mark Carney.

JULY

New docs
The moment Dr. Ali Akbar Bohra laid eyes on Haliburton, he said it was love at first sight. One of the five new physicians to land in cottage country over the past 18 months, Bohra said all it took was a quick Google search to convince he and his family that their future lay in the Highlands. He joined the emergency department at the Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) in May 2024.

Bishop speaks out
Greg Bishop, a County-based Ontario land surveyor, warned Dysart et al council against making changes to the township's official plan (OP) and zoning bylaw to allow certain structures on private property three metres from the water. Speaking at a July 8 public meeting, Bishop said he's studied every shoreline on every lake in the municipality during his 30-plus year career, noticing one consistent problem across all waterbodies – erosion.

Pride in the flag
Dysart et al council agreed to host a flag-raising ceremony at A.J. LaRue Arena in August as part of Pride in the Highlands' 'Pride Week' festivities. At a June 24 meeting, Chris Hewson, Pride in the Highlands co-chair, advocated for an official ceremony in Haliburton to coincide with the annual flag-raising held in Minden since 2016.

Teeing up for HHHS
For the third straight year, the Matt Duchene Charity Golf Classic broke fundraising records, bringing in more than $234,000 for the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF). The sold-out event attracted 178 golfers to Blairhampton Golf Club July 18, eclipsing last year's total by around $12,000. Vince Duchene, dad to National Hockey League star Matt, played a pivotal role in organizing this year's event, alongside Troy Austen and Susannah Moylan.

100 years of trucking
For as long as he can remember, Minden's Tom Prentice Sr.'s life has revolved around maintaining roads across Haliburton County. The longtime owner of Tom Prentice and Sons said his family was celebrating 100 years of service in the Highlands. At 84 years young, he's been along for the ride for the long haul.

AUGUST

Ryan Ramsay not coaching Huskies.

Dominion turns 160
More than 20 years ago, Shawn Chamberlin and his wife Elli purchased the Dominion Hotel in downtown Minden with plans to tear it down. They thought the land could be put to better use as a parking lot to support their restaurant Grill on the Gull. Instead, they discovered the historic icon was a good source of cash flow and they didn't touch a thing – at first. The more time the couple spent in the place, the more they fell in love with it, realizing it had a story to tell. The historic landmark turned 160 years old in 2025.

Coach leaving
As Ryan Ramsay ramped up for another season of junior hockey, preparations were much different in fall 2025 as the popular Haliburton County Huskies coach took on a full-time role with the Ontario Hockey League's (OHL) Peterborough Petes. It was a full circle moment for the bench boss, who returned to the organization that drafted him 13th overall in the 1999 OHL Priority Selection. He stayed on as Huskies general manager.

Charity golf
On Aug. 14, Help A Village Effort hosted its 5th Ron Reid H.A.V.E. Charity Golf Tournament at the Gull River Golf Course in Minden. Board chair Michele Coneybeare said they raised $22,500, which would allow the charity to build nine wells in rural villages in India. "Each well impacts approximately 600 people, and most wells are installed in villages with schools," Coneybeare said. She added this year's tournament is Aug. 13.

Business leaving
A long-time Minden-based manufacturer announced it was leaving the County. TekVest said it was departing its premises on County Road 121 near Howland Junction for the Kitchener Waterloo region. Founder and former co-owner, as well as current shareholder, Steve Brand, said the move meant laying off staff, which had ranged from six to 10 people depending on orders. The property was put up for sale.

SEPTEMBER

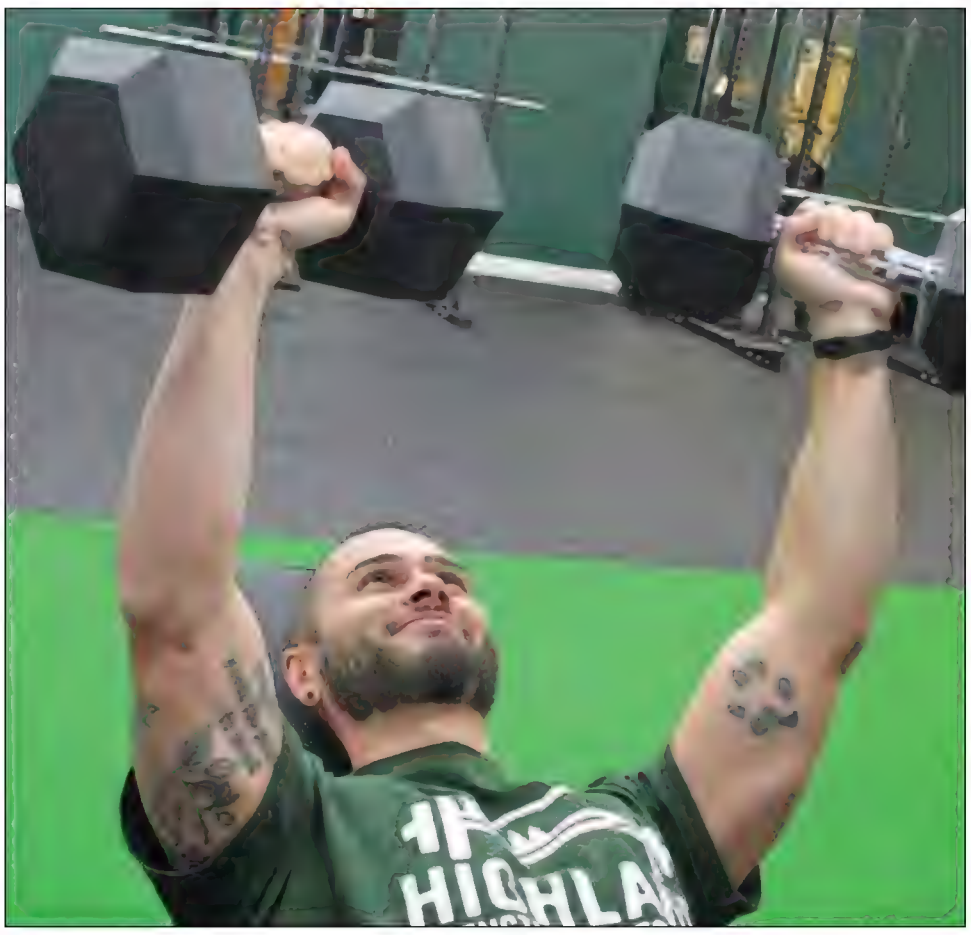
Prime minister visits
Tegan Legge, general manager of tourism and recreation at Haliburton Forest, said they got a call from Prime Minister Mark Carney's people about two weeks before the Haliburton Trail Race – saying Carney and his wife, Diana Fox-Carney, wanted to compete in the 26km race, Sept 6. However, she said the planning didn't take a lot of Forest time. She said his detail came for a couple of visits to check out the trails. She toured them around, showing them the aid stations. "And that was it. They were very non-invasive. They wanted him to just be able to go out and be Mark Carney (and Diana Fox Carney), not the prime minister that day."

Mental health clinic
Haliburton County agencies that work with people with mental health challenges welcomed the Sept. 18 opening of a new walk-in clinic. The Canadian Mental Health Association Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge (CMHA HKPR) announced the mental health walk-in clinic at 6 McPherson St. The clinic operates one day a week on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., with CMHA HKPR saying it will offer timely access to mental health support for individuals aged 16 and older.

It'll take awhile
Key Habitat for Humanity and Places for People (P4P) figureheads say it will likely be years before a planned 35-unit affordable housing co-build is complete on Peninsula Road in Haliburton. The two entities held an information session at the Haliburton Legion Sept. 18, confirming the non-profits will partner on the condo development.

2025 year in review

Veteran banners.



Alex Monteiro.

OCTOBER

Dr. Bill Kerr of VDO.

Two more docs
Two new family doctors have signed on to practise in Haliburton County – taking the number of new physician arrivals in the Highlands to eight since early 2024. Dr. Mario Lupu arrives as an overseas-trained doctor, having earned degrees in Europe, and joins the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Organization (HHFHO) roster with a clinical expertise in community-based family medicine and proficiency in sports and urgent care medicine. Joining Lupu at HHFHO is Dr. Carly Eisbrenner, further bolstering the Haliburton Family Medical Centre team. Joining Nov. 1, Eisbrenner took on 700 new patients as part of her full-time practise, while also filling shifts in the emergency and inpatient departments at HHHS.

Future youth and family hub
Point in Time purchased a property at 5219 County Road 21 in Haliburton for a future youth and family hub. Executive director Marg Cox said the plan is to eventually sell the two offices they have at 69 Eastern Ave., sell the youth hub building on Dysart Avenue, and end the lease on their offices on Highland Street. They estimate they will only need about half of the new lot, allowing them to sell the rest for more money to put towards the project. Cox did not have an estimated cost, or timeline

Thanks, VDO
After seeing more than 1,300 patients from the Highlands, and doing in excess of $4.7 million worth of free dentistry since May 19, 2011, Volunteer Dental Outreach (VDO) has closed its clinic in Haliburton. The charity confirmed on Oct. 12 that it had shuttered its doors. The board of directors made the voluntary decision at their Sept. 25 regular board meeting. The winding down is a direct result of Canada's new Dental Care Plan, in which low-income residents now have access to dentistry.

Frankenstein
Hank DeBruin and Tanya McCready DeBruin got a call from California in the fall of 2023; from Birds and Animals Unlimited looking for some sled dogs for a movie. The owners of Winterdance Dogsled Tours in Haliburton then hosted Hollywood visitor, Thomas Gunderson, who took photos and measurements of their purebred Siberian Huskies. He never mentioned what the movie was or who was directing it. It turned out to be the blockbuster, *Frankenstein.*

Hodgson named Highlander
Haliburton's Andrew Hodgson has earned many accolades throughout his career as a political staffer and real estate agent, but none carried as much meaning as when he was named 2025 Highlander of the Year. Hodgson beat out seven others to claim the award at the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce annual business excellence awards, at the Haliburton Legion Oct. 26.

NOVEMBER

Banner year
This is a banner year for the Haliburton Legion. In November, flags commemorating 24 of the community's military veterans were hung in the downtown – part of an effort to bring more awareness to, and honour, the sacrifices many have made defending their country. The project was spearheaded by legion president Mike Waller.

Time for Minden BIA?
After investing in Minden's main shopping hub last summer, purchasing a three-unit building on Bobcaygeon Road, realtor Brandon Nimigon lead the charge for a downtown business improvement area (BIA) – though some longtime merchants weren't convinced. Nimigon purchased 105-107 Bobcaygeon Rd. in July, wanting to move Century 21's Minden operation closer to the community's downtown.

Hali beer store to close
The Beer Store (TBS) officially announced the pending closure of its location at 15 Hops Dr. in Haliburton, with grocery stores trying to figure out what their role will be with empties. A spokesperson for The Beer Store confirmed the closure for Jan. 11, 2026, saying, "we know this is disappointing news for staff, customers, and the local community."

Pet Valu moving
The owners of the Hops Drive plaza in Haliburton are planning a "significant investment" in the building; including renovating to accommodate a large Pet Valu store in the space to be vacated by The Beer Store after Jan. 11 2026. Adam Brind has owned the building since 2021. He said after NAPA Auto Parts left the plaza, he built their new location on Industrial Park Road. He said Pet Valu reached out nearly 18 months ago, but at the time, there was no vacancy. That changed with The Beer Store confirming it would be closing its Haliburton location.

DECEMBER

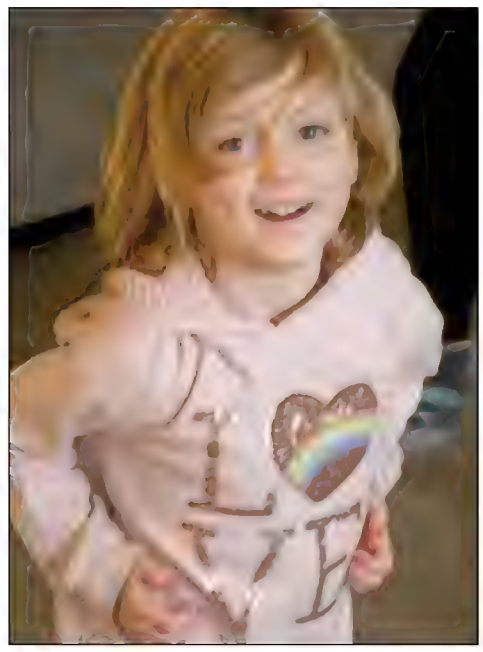
New Minden gym
For Alex Monteiro, running a gym is all about reducing friction for members. "Life is busy, and finding time for the gym can be tough," the co-owner of the new Highland Strength and Performance (HSP) in Minden says. Monteiro and his wife, Heather, own the new business in the Heritage Plaza building. Monteiro has worked in the fitness industry for more than a decade; training everyone from youth athletes, busy professionals, and older folks looking to stay strong and active.

New land for Trust
The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT) will soon be adding a seventh property to its portfolio of protected local nature reserves. HHLT will close on a 200-acre property north of Minden in late January. The land is located along Plantation Road and serves as a buffer to the Highlands Corridor – a 100,000-hectare strip of unceded Crown, municipal and public land that connects Silent Lake, Kawartha Highlands and Queen Elizabeth II provincial parks.

Strong mayors
For the first time in Haliburton County history, a mayor has prepared a township budget, along with staff, under the Strong Mayors act. The Minden Hills draft budget was tabled at a Dec. 15 special council meeting. Mayor Bob Carter said it was his "privilege" to present the proposed budget, adding, "2026 will be a challenging year for Minden Hills. Municipal government must sustain essential programs and services and rebuild aging infrastructure whilst ensuring that our tax rates remain affordable for our citizens."

(Year in review compiled by Lisa Gervais)

Highlander community



On the move

It was a high-energy day at Little Beans Play Café in Minden Jan. 11, with two new six-week dance classes kicking off. Lead by competitive dancers Hadley Nesbitt and Madelin Bain, toddlers were introduced to some basic movements and routines. Sessions for kids aged 18 months to 3 years old and 4-6 years last 45 minutes and are fully booked, with more classes beginning Feb. 1.

Top left: Penelope Horsley, smiles as she practices her form. Top middle: Madelin Bain and Hadley Nesbitt lead the classes. Top right: Four-year-old Ostara Talluri enjoying herself. Bottom left: Rylee Stevenson and Horsley, both 4, follow along. Bottom middle: Stevenson showcases her balance. Bottom right: Mom Ashley Xerri helps her daughter, three-year-old Raelynn, during a game of Simon Says. *Photos by Mike Baker*

SIR SAM'S INN & SPA

JANUARY EVENTS

LIVE MUSIC ALL MONTH LONG:
January 17 – Call for details
January 24 – Jeff Moulton
January 31 – Call for details

NEW Dining Packages Let us do the cooking this week!
Call for reservations (705) 754 2188

Spa & WaterSpa Soothe your soremuscles through hydrotherapy in the WaterSpa or have a relaxing Spa Therapy session with us. Call us at (705 754 2188) or visit the Spa page of www.sirsamsinn.com for details or to book.

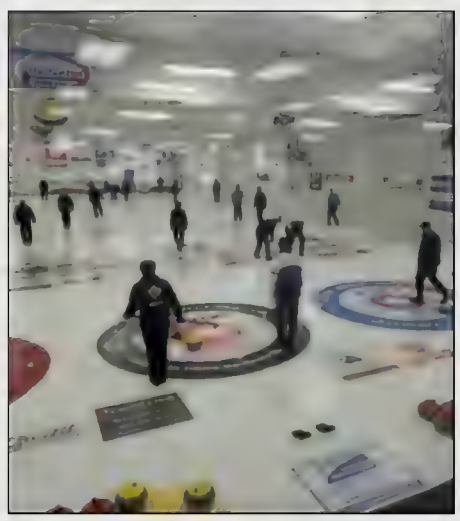
Dip n Dine Package Sunday through Thursday, add our relaxing WaterSpa experience for two for just $15 more when you make a dinner reservation!

Prime Rib Monday! Settle into our lakeview dining room for slow-roasted perfection with Yorkshire pudding, au jus, and your choice of potato and salad.

Fish Fryday Join us Fridays and enjoy Halibut and Chips for $28.95 OR Pan Seared Pickerel or Salmon with your choice of potato $38, both include salad and are plus tax.

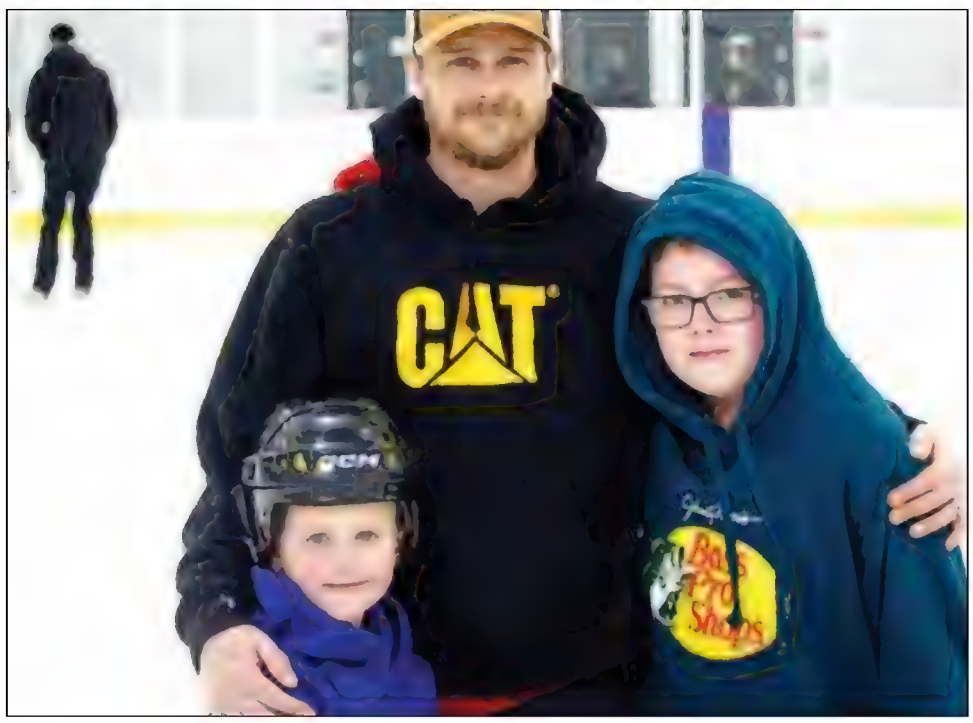
Minden club scoops win

The curling season is in full swing across the Highlands, with teams from two local clubs duking it out in the third leg of the Mens' 4-Town bonspiel in Haliburton Jan. 7. The event sees players from Haliburton, Minden, Bobcaygeon and Fenelon Falls compete on the ice for bragging rights. The Minden Curling Club took home first place, Bobcaygeon finished second and Fenelon Falls third. The final leg takes place in Minden March 10. The Haliburton club will be busy again this weekend, with the annual Skyline bonspiel taking centre stage. The 65th annual event runs Jan. 16-18. The Todd's Independent mixed bonspiel is Jan. 31 and Feb. 1, with the Highland Lassie women's bonspiel Feb. 28. Minden will host a winter mixed bonspiel Jan. 30/31 and the RockBuster Mens' bonspiel Feb. 20. *(Mike Baker).*



Teams in action during the latest leg of the Mens' 4-Town bonspiel in Haliburton. *Photo submitted.*

Highlander community



Hitting the ice

The ice surface was busy at S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena Jan. 11, with dozens enjoying a free community skate in the afternoon. The arena hosts complimentary public skating most Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays through winter, with ones coming up Jan. 20 and 22 (3:30-4:50 p.m.), and Jan. 25 (2:30-4:20 p.m.).

Left: Mike McHardy and three-year-old Wilder McHardy had a blast. Top right: Kris and Isaac Marles get ready to hit the ice. Bottom right: Michael, Doug and Carter pose for a shot on the ice. *Photos by Mike Baker.*

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY DIAL 911 • AFTER-HOURS MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY DIAL 1-866-856-3247 • WWW.MINDENHILLS.CA

MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

• A selection of artwork from the Agnes Jamieson Gallery's permanent collection, as well as new acquisitions, is now on display. The Gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am – 4 pm. All are welcome. Admission is by donation. All are welcome.

• The Minden Hills Cultural Centre will host a free screening of *Sovereign Soil* (2019) on Thursday, January 15 at 1:00 PM. The documentary follows farmers, families, and Indigenous youth in and around Dawson City, Yukon, as they grow food north of the 60th parallel. The film explores the challenges and rewards of northern agriculture, highlighting resilience, community, and deep relationships with the land. Presented in collaboration with the Haliburton County Public Library, this screening is open to all ages. Admission is free. No pre-registration is required.

For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

ENHANCED BLUE BOX PROGRAM

Starting January 1, 2026, Minden Hills, along with all Ontario municipalities, transitioned to an enhanced Blue Box Program. You can now recycle more than ever before! Circular Materials Ontario is now responsible for the Blue Box Program province wide. Learn more by visiting circularmaterials.ca/ON/minden-hills.

SNOW REMOVAL

Section 181 of the Ontario Highway Traffic Act states: No person shall deposit snow or ice on a roadway without permission in writing so to do from the Ministry or the road authority responsible for the maintenance of the road. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, s. 181.

WINTER REGISTERED PROGRAMS

There is space still available in our youth and adult winter registered programs. Please inquire with the Administration staff at the desk at the SG Nesbitt Memorial arena to register.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

• January 22 - Regular Council Meeting
• February 12 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

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Highlander community

More hours, after-school for Dorset kids

By Mike Baker

The Dorset branch of the Haliburton County Public Library has extended its hours for the new year, introducing a new service on Thursday evenings.

CEO and chief librarian Andrea Brown noted the library board approved an increase in service hours at Dorset last fall.

The decision was made following a public survey, conducted over the summer, where one of the primary requests was to extend the hours at the County's northernmost branch.

As part of the service expansion, Brown said the library is introducing an after-school hangout program in Dorset. It will run from 3 to 7 p.m. and be open to all County families.

She said it will provide "an opportunity to unwind together after the school day." The program will operate as a drop-in, featuring a mix of hands-on activities routed in science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM), creative play and open-ended exploration of the library space.

Brown said there will be free 'Teen Exam Week Survival Kits' available to youth Jan. 16 and 17, helping high schoolers to prepare for the end of the fall semester. Each kit is packed with study helpers, chill-out items and snacks to help maintain focus.

The Dorset branch, located inside the Dorset Recreation Centre, reopened in October 2024 following a years-long closure.

It's open four days a week – Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Thursdays from 3 to 7 p.m.; Fridays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For more information, including a full run of upcoming programs, visit www.haliburtonlibrary.ca/About-Us/Branches-Hours/Dorset-Branch.

Haliburton County Public Library CEO and chief librarian, Andrea Brown. *File.*

Notice of Application for Approval to Expropriate Land

Form 2
Expropriations Act

IN THE MATTER OF the proposed expropriation of land by the Minister of Transportation, in the Geographic Township of Lutterworth, Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills, County of Haliburton, Province of Ontario.

FOR THE PURPOSE OF culvert replacement, rockfall hazard improvements and future rehabilitation and maintenance of King's Highway 35 and all other works related thereto.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that application has been made for approval to expropriate the land described in the schedule attached hereto.

The approving authority is the Minister of Transportation with an address of:

Minister of Transportation
777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 1Z8
416-327-9200

Any owner of lands in respect of which notice is given, who desires to comment on the proposed expropriation of the land for the described purpose(s) may do so by submitting the comment within the time stated herein to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Transportation Infrastructure Management Division, Ministry of Transportation, in writing.

The Ministry will review the comments for their technical/engineering information, having regard to the need for the land for the purposes of the project.

The Assistant Deputy Minister must receive the comments within thirty days after the owner is served with this notice, or within thirty days after the first publication of the notice.

The comments must be sent:

By e-mail to: Property.Process@ontario.ca

Or by mail to: Assistant Deputy Minister
Transportation and Infrastructure Management
Ministry of Transportation
4th Floor, Garden City Tower
301 St. Paul Street
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7R4

Please include the municipal address of the land in the comment.

The expropriating authority is the Minister of Transportation with an address of:

777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 1Z8
416-327-9200

Minister of Transportation

Per: *"original signed by Cristina Makitalo"*

c/o Cristina Makitalo
Conveyancing Supervisor
447 McKeown Avenue, Suite 301
North Bay, ON P1B 9S9

SCHEDULE A

All right, title and interest in the lands described as follows:

1. Part of PIN 39254-0178 (LT); Part of Lot 27, Concession 5, Geographic Township of Lutterworth, Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills, County of Haliburton; Designated as Part 1 on 19R-11127 (Ministry Plan P-2789-184). Part 1 is subject to easement as in H43977.
2. Part of PIN 39208-0181 (LT); Part of Lot 15, Concession 8, Geographic Township of Lutterworth, Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills, County of Haliburton; Designated as Part 1 on 19R-11124 (Ministry Plan P-2789-187).
3. Part of PIN 39254-0177 (LT); Part of Lot 27, Concession 5, Geographic Township of Lutterworth, Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills, County of Haliburton; Designated as Part 2 on 19R-11127 (Ministry Plan P-2789-184)

All right, title and interest for a limited period from January 1, 2026, up to and including December 31, 2031, in the lands described as follows:

1. Part of PIN 39254-0183 (LT); Part of Lot 27, Concession 5, Geographic Township of Lutterworth, Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills, County of Haliburton; Designated as Parts 1 & 2 on 19R-11126 (Ministry Plan P-2789-183). Part 2 is subject to Easement as in H246325.
2. Part of PIN 39254-0185 (LT); Part of Lot 27, Concession 5, Geographic Township of Lutterworth, Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills, County of Haliburton; Designated as Part 3 on 19R-11126 (Ministry Plan P-2789-183).
3. Part of PIN 39208-0066 (LT); Part of Lot 19, Concession 7, Geographic Township of Lutterworth, Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills, County of Haliburton; Designated as Part 1 on 19R-11123 (Ministry Plan P-2789-185).
4. Part of PIN 39208-0067 (LT); Part of Lots 18 and 19, Concession 7, Geographic Township of Lutterworth, Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills, County of Haliburton; Designated as Part 1 on 19R-11125 (Ministry Plan P-2789-186). Part 1 is subject to Easement as in H70717.
5. Part of PIN 39255-0164 (LT); Part of Lots 18 and 19, Concession 7, Geographic Township of Lutterworth, Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills, County of Haliburton; Designated as Part 2 on 19R-11125 (Ministry Plan P-2789-186).

THIS NOTICE WAS FIRST PUBLISHED ON: JANUARY 15, 2026.

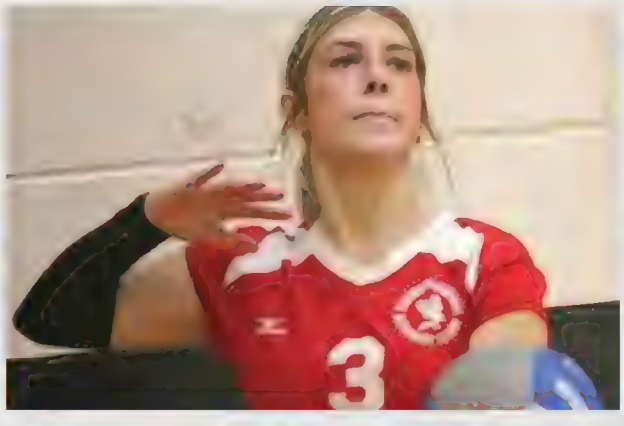
Ontario

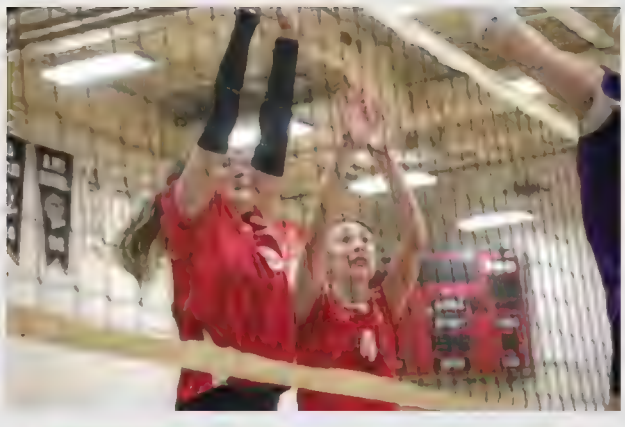
Junior highlanders

Swish swish for Red Hawks

The Hal High Red Hawks senior boys' basketball team put on a clinic Jan. 5, defeating the visiting Fenelon Falls Falcons 71-21. The team has won all six games its played so far this season, leading the Central Ontario Secondary Schools Association (COSSA) West Division with 12 points – six more than IE Weldon and Lindsay Collegiate and Vocational Institute (LCVI) in second and third. They beat LCVI 55-47 on Jan. 13 to make it seven wins from seven. The boys have three games to play in the regular season, with their last home game Jan. 15 against Brock (3 p.m. start).

Top left: Tristan Leslie makes a move to beat his opponent. Top right: Miles Arpadzic looks for a pass. Bottom left: Isaac Borgdorff and Arpadzic playing hard on defence. Bottom right: Aiden McGee-Leckie finds the basket. *Photos by Mike Baker.*





Leaving it all on the court

The Hal High Red Hawks junior girls' volleyball team travelled to Fenelon Falls Jan. 13 for an inter-school tournament in the COSSA Kawartha division. The girls rallied off wins against St. Thomas Aquinas and Fenelon Falls, tied with LCVI and lost to IE Weldon. They sit third in the division, behind Fenelon Falls and Weldon.

Photos by Mike Baker.

The Huskies

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Huskies defenceman Josh Hutton gets to grips with a Stouffville forward while goaltender Owen Edwards follows the play in a 3-2 loss Jan. 8. *Photo courtesy of Andy Corneau/OJHL Images.*

Late start costs Huskies

By Mike Baker

After watching his team come up just short in defeat to the league-leading Stouffville Spirit last week, Haliburton County Huskies head coach Jordan Bailey said the result was a timely reminder for his players to play consistent hockey for a full 60 minutes.

The blue and white went into the Jan. 8 match-up on a high, riding an 11-game point streak that stretched back to November and included a 3-2 win over the Spirit on home ice Jan. 3.

Stouffville, the top team in the Ontario Junior Hockey League's East Conference, laid down a marker early-on in last Thursday's tilt with the Huskies, flying out of the gates in the first to take an early lead. They added two more in the second to put the Huskies in a three-goal hole.

"We made too many mistakes against a good hockey team… a couple guys just didn't have their best night. When you're up against these top teams, you can't be a little sleepy for 40 minutes and expect to have one good period and win," Bailey said.

During that second intermission, Bailey said he had conversations with some team leaders and shuffled lines around to try and generate a spark. It paid dividends almost immediately.

Alternate captain Isaac Larmand notched his team-leading 19th goal of the season five minutes into the final frame, teed up by fellow alternate captain Carson Durnin and Ryan Gosse. The team grew in confidence and created several scoring chances but were stymied by an in-form Hayden Sabourin in the Spirit goal.

With time ticking down, offensive defenseman Ryan Fairbairn – re-acquired by the Huskies last week in a trade with the King Rebellion that sent goalscoring forward Julius Da Silva out of town – made it a one-goal game at 16:24, with Durnin and Gosse assisting again.

Despite a late push the Huskies couldn't find the tying goal, slumping to a regulation defeat for the first time in 44 days.

Bailey said he was excited to welcome Fairbairn back into the fold – he contributed five points in 17 games for the Huskies last season before a mid-season trade to King – though acknowledged it was tough to lose the 17-year-old Da Silva, who had been a strong offensive contributor with 20 points in 33 games.

"Sometimes you've got to give up a good hockey player to get a good hockey player," Bailey said. "We didn't really want to trade Ryan last year, but we needed a piece for our playoff run. He's someone who moves the puck very well and has a lot of skill on the backend but can also play a physical shutdown game."

Huskies 4-1 St. Mike's

The Huskies got back to winning ways Jan. 11, putting the St. Michael's Buzzers to the sword 4-1 in Toronto. Carter Nadon, making a rare appearance in place of usual starter Owen Edwards, made 24 saves in the victory.

It was far from the perfect start, Bailey noted, with St. Mike's scoring an early go-ahead goal six minutes in. Fairbairn brought the visitors level at 10:18, scoring on the powerplay from Durnin and Mike Mardula. Chase Del Colombo added another, this one shorthanded, at 16:24 from Harrison O'Connor.

The impressive O'Connor got on the scoresheet himself in the middle frame, finding twine at 6:29 from linemates Nic Ferrante and Carter Petrie. That fourth line was at it again before the period was over, Petrie this time turning scorer with assists going to O'Connor and Ferrante.

"Our fourth line was very good again all night. It kind of calms down the bench a little bit knowing that any line can go out there, do a job and make a difference to help the team out," Bailey said.

With just 16 games remaining in the regular season, the Huskies find themselves comfortably in a playoff position, sitting fifth with 52 points from 40 games – nine more than the Buzzers in sixth. They're level on points with the fourth-placed Newmarket Hurricanes, one back of the Pickering Panthers in third and six behind the Trenton Golden Hawks in second.

A trip to Trenton is next up on the Huskies schedule, with the two locking horns Jan. 16. Bailey said it will be another big test for his squad.

"We just need to come out and play our brand of hockey, don't try to change too much. Trenton has a good hockey team, very offensive, so we've got to limit their scoring chances, make sure we keep pucks to the outside as much as possible in a small barn. If we can do that, we'll put ourselves in a good situation," Bailey said.

The Huskies are back home Jan. 17 when they welcome the Aurora Tigers. Puck drop is 6 p.m.

Home of the Highland Storm

Left: Hudson Lynch dekes past an opponent.

Right: Nathan Demerchant waits for the puck to drop.
Photos by Mike Baker.

Gritty display by Storm

After a slow start to the season, the U9MD Haliburton Hockey Haven team is finally hitting its stride and emerging as a legitimate competitive force. The squad has strung together its strongest stretch yet - two hard-fought ties followed by a well-earned win - building momentum and confidence with every shift.

Their latest challenge Jan. 10 came against the powerful second-place Lindsay Muskies, a rematch that tested the team's growth. While the final score read 12-3 in favour of the Muskies, the result doesn't capture the full picture. Compared to their previous meeting, the team showed marked improvement in structure, resilience, and overall effort. The young players skated with purpose, battled for pucks, and refused to back down, demonstrating clear progress and a growing belief in themselves.

Ella Sperrino delivered her best performance of the season - battling fiercely on every shift this past weekend and setting the tone with incredible work ethic. Goaltender Quinnten Clark was also a standout, standing tall with several huge saves.

Gryphon Luck continued his excellent two-way play as a top defensive forward, while speedy wingers James Pettes, Jackson Reid, and James Seed kept the pace high. On the backend, the steady pairing of Johnny Adlam and Annabelle Hutson held the line, with Easton Sperrino stepping up big with timely blocked shots.

The scoreboard told one story, but the ice told another: a team that's improving every game, playing with heart, and heading firmly in the right direction.

The team followed up with a 1-0 win over Sturgeon Lake Jan. 11 in Fenelon Falls, with Gaffney potted the game's only goal late in the third period, inspiring his team to victory. *Submitted.*

STARS of the WEEK

MADDOX GAFFNEY
Led the charge up front with two goals, including a bar-down laser that energized the crowd.

HUDSON LYNCH
A rock on the blueline, logging heavy minutes and always willing to put his body on the line for his team.

NATHAN DEMERCHANT
Turned heads with relentless pressure, strong play in all zones and a well-deserved goal.

Photos by Tim Tofflemire

SCORE BOARD

Jan. 8
U11 Rep Tom Prentice & Sons vs. Lindsay 3-1 L
U15 The Pepper Mill Steak & Pasta House vs. Sturgeon 5-3 W
Jan. 9
U15 Rep Cheryl Smith RE/MAX vs Durham 7-1 W
Jan. 10
U9 MD Haliburton Hockey Haven vs Lindsay 12-3 L
U9 Cottage Country Building Supplies vs. Lindsay 9-3 L
U13 Rep Curry Chevrolet vs. Orono 6-1 W
U9 Yellow Sharp Electric vs. Kawartha 6-2 L
U15 The Pepper Mill Steak & Pasta House vs. Kawartha 4-3 L
U18 A&W Haliburton vs. Brock 8-1 W
Jan. 11
U9 Sharp Electric vs. Kawartha 3-3 T
U7 GJ Burtch vs. Manvers 0-0 T
U9 Cottage Country Building Supplies vs. Lindsay 9-3 L
U9 MD Haliburton Hockey Haven vs Sturgeon 1-0 W
U15 The Pepper Mill Steak & Pasta House vs. Kawartha 4-0 W
U18 LL A&W Haliburton vs. Kawartha 6-2 W
U18 Rep Haliburton Timber Mart vs. Millbrook 5-5 T

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What's on

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Office open 9 a.m. to noon, clubroom closed. Bridge at 1 p.m.
Tuesdays: Games and cards night starting at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome. Fun darts at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid euchre 1 p.m. start, Remembrance Hall. Bingo, doors open at 5 p.m. with a 7 p.m. start time, Remembrance Hall. Snack bar available from 5:30 p.m. – French fries and hot dogs available while supplies last.
Thursdays: General meeting third Thursday of the month, ladies auxiliary meeting last Thursday of the month.
Fridays: meat draw, five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m., tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts 4:30 p.m. onwards. 50/50 draw at 5 p.m., tickets are $1 and available in the clubroom. Beginning July 4, board games for seniors from 10 a.m. to noon.
Saturdays: Open only for special events Clubroom hours: Monday 3-9 p.m., Tues 5-9 p.m., Wed/Thurs 3-6 p.m., Fri 3-7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday closed.

Royal Canadian Legion - Mabel D. Brannigan Branch 636 Minden

Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Monday to Thursday** with regular menu and daily special including Liver Lovers' **Tuesday**.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner 4-7 p.m.
Saturday all day breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541
Weekly activities:
Karaoke: call for dates
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week.
Monday: Euchre 1-3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1-3 p.m., Darts 7-9 p.m. and euchre 7-9 p.m.

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 624 Wilberforce

Monday: open 7 to 10 p.m. There's darts Jan. 19, and 26 at 7 p.m. Cost is $5 per player.
Tuesday: closed, special events only. Jan. 20 and 27 is seniors exercise club at 1:30 p.m.
Wednesday: open 2 to 10 p.m. Jan. 21 and 28 is darts at 2 p.m. $5/player. There's also quick supper from 5 to 6:30 p.m., with the menu changing weekly. Cost is $10 per person. And open cribbage starts at 6:30 p.m., no need to pre-register.
Thursday: open 2 to 10 p.m. HHHS social rec Jan. 22 at 10 a.m.
Friday: open 2 to 11 p.m. Jan. 16 and 30 is fish and chips from 5 to 8 p.m. One piece is $15, two pieces is $20. Jan. 23 is wings and jam session from 5 to 8 p.m. Cost is $15 per pound. Jan. 23 is community care 55+ lunch at noon, cost is $17 per person.
Saturday: open 2 to 9 p.m. Meat draw Jan. 17, 24 and 31 at 3 p.m. Jan. 24 is the Pat and Phyllis Gallen Lake Trout Ice Fishing Derby, weigh-in at 3 p.m. Karaoke also Jan. 24 at 8 p.m. Jan. 31 is trivia night at 7 p.m., cost is $5 per player.
Sunday: closed, special events only.

EVENTS

Jan. 15, 1 to 3 p.m. Haliburton Highlands Writers and Editors Network meeting at the Minden branch of the Haliburton County Public Library. Gather and meet members, read stories, general news. For more information contact Kay Millard at 705-286-6635. Meetings run the third Thursday of each month.

Jan. 15, 2 to 3 p.m. The Dysart branch of the Haliburton County Public Library is hosting a free hands-on winter landscape needle felting workshop. Learn how to make snowy hills, evergreen trees and starry skies. All materials provided. Registration required, call 705-457-2241 or email programs@haliburtonlibrary.ca. Also offered at the Minden Hills branch Jan. 21 from 2 to 3 p.m. and the Dorset library Jan. 30 from 1 to 2 p.m.

Jan. 17, 2 to 3 p.m. The Dysart branch of the Haliburton County Public Library is hosting a how to care for houseplants workshop. An expert will guide you through the basics, including watering, lighting, repotting, soil types, common pests and easy troubleshooting tips. Registration required, call 705-457-2241 or email programs@haliburtonlibrary.ca.

Jan. 18, 6-9 p.m. Medeba is hosting an indoor community climbing experience at its location at 1270 Kennisis Lake Road. There are a range of routes for all levels of climbers. Cost is $15 per person, with shoe rentals available for $5. No registration necessary, just drop in. Also running Jan. 25, Feb. 1 and 8.

Jan. 22, 11 a.m. to noon, join the Highland Grove library for its Savouring Stories offering. Each month, we explore the world of food through stories, history, shared experiences, and cooking. No registration required.

Jan. 24, 9 a.m. It's opening day for the Minden Ice Races. Swing by the Minden Fairgrounds to watch drivers as they manoeuvre the slick track. Spectator admission is free. Races are also running all day Sunday, with an 11 a.m. start time.

Jan. 24, 9 to 11 a.m. Community breakfast at Haliburton United Church (10 George St.), hosted by the North Entrance Masonic Lodge and Haliburton United Church. Donations are welcome and will help to support school breakfast programs in the County.

Jan. 24, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Trapper's workshop at the Lloyd Watson Centre in Wilberforce. Admission is by donation, with food donations to the Central Food Network welcomed. Everyone is invited to attend. For more information, contact Ted at 705-448-2877.

Jan. 25, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Infant CPR and first aid information session at Little Beans Play Café in Minden. Learn essential skills with hands-on training by CPR-certified facilitators Shay and Sarah. Cost is $40 per family. For more information, or to register, contact wellnesshubhali@gmail.com.

Jan. 25, 2 p.m. Razzamataz Kids' Shows returns to the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilionwith Somebody Loves you Mr. Hatch, a production by Axis Theatre. Tickets are $7 for children and $10 for adults. There will be a puppet workshop following the show. The combined cost for the show and workshop is $15.

Have a non-profit event you want advertised? email mike@thehighlander.ca

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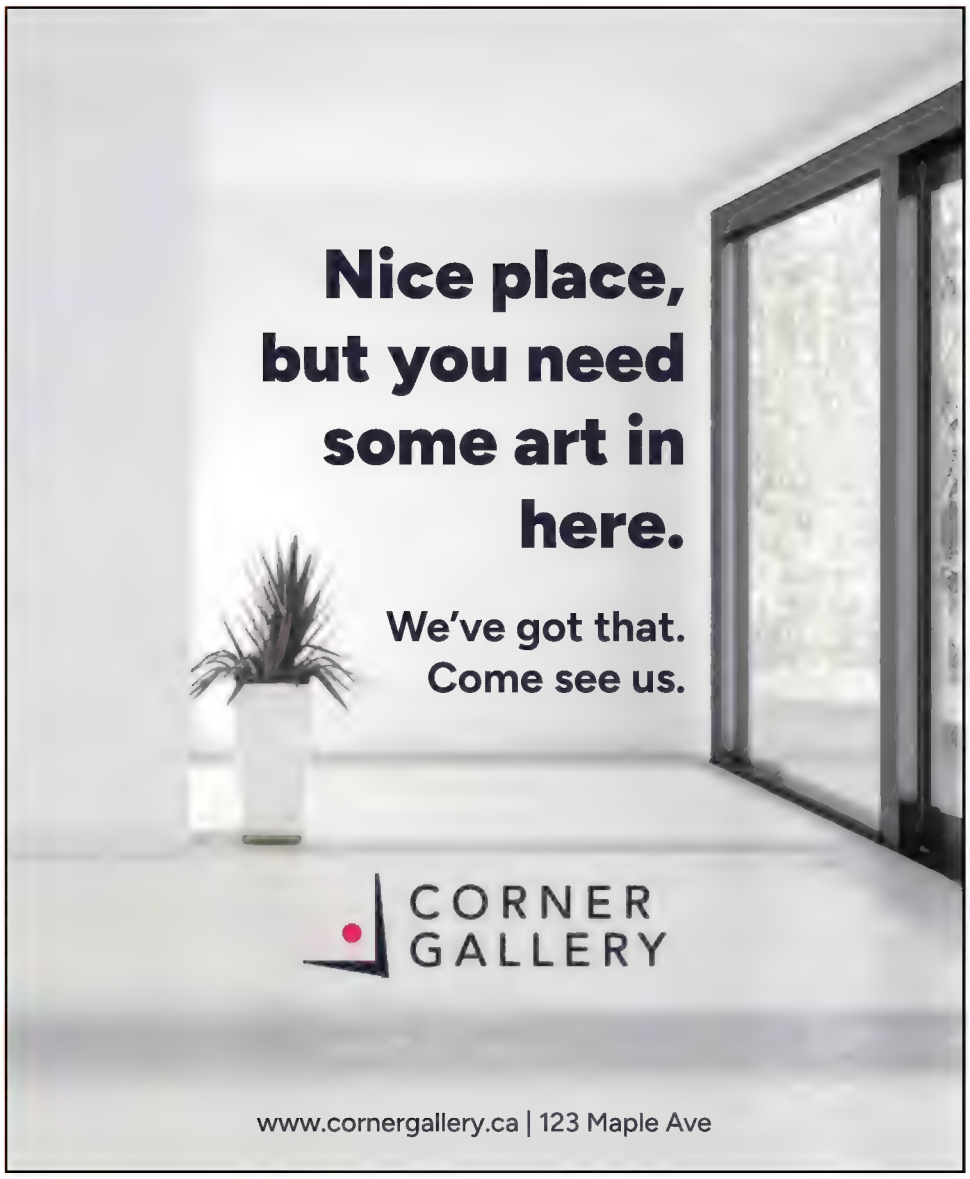

What's on

Volunteers will be getting the fairgrounds ready for the Minden Ice Races return Jan. 24/25. *File.*

50 years of Minden ice races

By Mike Baker

Despite a weather-enforced hiccup in preparations this past weekend, volunteers involved with the Minden Ice Races remain hopeful of launching its 2026 season as intended Jan. 24-25.

With temperatures climbing as high as 10C on Saturday, accompanied by rain, longtime local racer and helper Jim Carrell said work ground to a halt at the fairgrounds.

"We still have some ice in there, we didn't lose any ice, but the weather really held us up. We should be making ice around the clock at this time of year, but you can't when it's raining," Carrell said. "It's not the first time that's happened to us."

With unseasonably warm weather limiting the ice racing season in Minden in recent years, Carrell said organizers are committed to launching later this month. "We certainly intend to try for Jan. 24/25," he said. Work transforming the track, taken on annually by the Minden Kinsmen, began in late November.

The races are celebrating 50 years in Minden in 2026. Carrell said the event was first held on frozen swampland, moving to the fairgrounds in the late 1970s. He noted the fairgrounds is one of the few dryland tracks still open in Canada, hosting official competition on behalf of the Canadian Automobile Sport Clubs (CASC).

The season typically spans six weekends, Carrell said, noting he's been a fixture at the Minden races for more than 20 years.

"I'm very excited. I'm just so happy to get out on the track and go racing. We're hoping for a busy season," Carrell said, noting there's usually 60 racers each weekend.

The races are open to anyone, with Carrell noting he spent about $2,500 all-in buying and preparing a 2009 Subaru Forester for the event. For rules on registration, visit casc.on.ca.

Carrell notes it's pre-tech weekend Jan. 17 and 18, with CASC representatives on-hand all day Saturday and Sunday vetting vehicles for entry. Safety checks take approximately 30 minutes.

"It's all done by appointment – they're making sure all the plastic is off the car so that the track doesn't get littered in the event of a collision. All cars need to have proper number boards, a rear-facing light bright enough to be seen through the snow dust, and working brake lights," he said. "They'll also be checking for working seatbelts, making sure batteries are properly secured and some other mechanical things."

Elaine Willis, CASC ice racing director, said there's a need for more volunteers to help with the upcoming season. CASC is looking for corner marshals and flaggers, grid crew and pit marshals, scrutineers and tech inspectors, timekeepers, stewards and administrators to help with registration.

She said no prior experience is necessary – just a willingness to help and learn on the job. For more information, contact iceracedir@gmail.com.

NOTICE
SPECIAL MEETING

TAKE NOTICE that there will be a Special Meeting of Council on **Thursday, January 29, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.** The purpose of the meeting is for Council and staff to continue discussions with BA Consulting Group to assist with the creation of a Parking Plan for the Township.

The meeting will be held in the Council Chambers located at 1123 North Shore Road, Algonquin Highlands.

Members of the Public may also observe the Council meeting by joining a live-stream link. The live-stream link can be found on the meeting Agenda at https://algonquinhighlands.civicweb.net/portal/

Dated this 15th day of January 2026.

Dawn Newhook, Clerk/Deputy CAO
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Road
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
Tel: (705) 489-2379 ext. 333
dnewhook@algonquinhighlands.ca

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All ages and abilities are welcome—no experience required.
Featuring square dance caller Hannah Shira Naiman, with live bluegrass music by Nathan Smith, Kyle Kirkpatrick, and Tim O'Reilly, plus a special performance by the Haliburton Scottish Country Dancers.
Tickets: $20 for adults; $10 for college students; free for children and high school students. Available at dancehappenshere.com and Redmans Records.
Scan for tickets!
DH3
Canada
Dance Happens Here Haliburton (DH3) is a proud part of the Haliburton County Community Co-operative.

Do you have newspapers from before 1980?

The Haliburton Highlands Digital Archive is seeking copies of old Haliburton County newspapers to complete their digital collection.

If you have local newspapers from before 1980 please visit **www.hhda.ca** for information on how to submit your papers to be included in the digital archive.

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OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Joann Louise Burke

Our family is so saddened to announce that our precious mom, Joann Louise Burke (née Towers), born in Mission, BC on Saturday, January 29th, 1955 passed away in Kingston on Friday, January 9th, 2026. She passed surrounded in love, with her daughters, Talitha & Christina, her son in law, Pete, three of her grandchildren, Poet, Malia and Mckenna, and one of the four special dogs in her life, Sila at her side.

She was a loving and committed wife to Tom (predeceased 2023). Her lifelong goal was to love and protect her children as best as she could; Talitha Greger, Christina (Pete) Allore and Adam (predeceased 2021), and of course, her dog Bella.

She loved her grandchildren and was proud of each of them; Talitha's kids: Kayle, Morgan (predeceased 2017), Poet, Malia; Christina's kids: Dawson, Denver, Olivia, Riley, Maya, Mckenna; and Adam's boys: Logan and Lucas.

Mom was the middle child of Iris Rambo (née Lynds, predeceased 2002). Older brother, Ken (Pam) predeceased her in 2014. Missing her immensely are her two sisters, Christine (Rod) Graham and Lori (Ray) Riggins, her little brother Jimmy (Sue) and her oldest nephew, Tan, who was like a little brother to her. Her half-sister, Janice (Erling) Jensen, cherished their relationship developed later in life.

Her nephews and nieces, Del, Shara-Dawn and Travis, Dylan and Jerod, Tanya and Riki, Jamie and Amanda, as well as those on Tom's side will miss their Auntie.

Mom wore many hats through her life, most recently as The Cleaning Fairy and the brains behind the scenes of Burke's Birdhouses, the charitable movement Dad took on during his last years. She had a lot of special extended family, church family (Minden Bible and West Guilford Baptist) and close friends...all of you meant so much to her. She will be sorely missed by her close friend John, as well as another dear friend, Cathy. You both helped this last year to be so special!

Mom's greatest adventure, to Nunavut with Bella to visit Talitha last winter was life changing! We take comfort that our Mom passed knowing that she and her girls had become a trio that were closer than ever! It was so special to share that gift together.

We invite everyone to join us in remembering our Mom on Saturday, January 17, 2026 at the Minden Bible Church, 177 Bobcaygeon Road, Minden ON. Visitation at 10am, service at 11am with a luncheon reception to follow.

If you're led to a donation in Mom's memory, local organizations focused on animals and children/family would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

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- Lead all aspects of the sales process from initial inquiry to move-in, ensuring a seamless and positive experience for prospective residents and their families.
- Consistently achieve and surpass occupancy and revenue goals.
- Conduct market and competitor analysis to identify opportunities and trends.
- Develop and execute business development initiatives to generate new leads and referrals.
- Prepare accurate forecasting and reporting to guide strategic decision-making.
- Build strong relationships with community partners, healthcare professionals, and local organizations to enhance referral networks.

Qualifications

- Proven track record of success in sales, ideally in retirement living, hospitality, or real estate.
- Strong business acumen with experience in forecasting, competitor analysis, and strategic planning.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to build trust and rapport.
- Self-motivated, goal-oriented, and highly organized.
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively within a team environment.

What We Offer

We believe in recognizing and rewarding results, hard work, and dedication. As part of our team, you'll enjoy:

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Job Types: Full-time, Permanent

Work Location: In person

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Highlander classifieds

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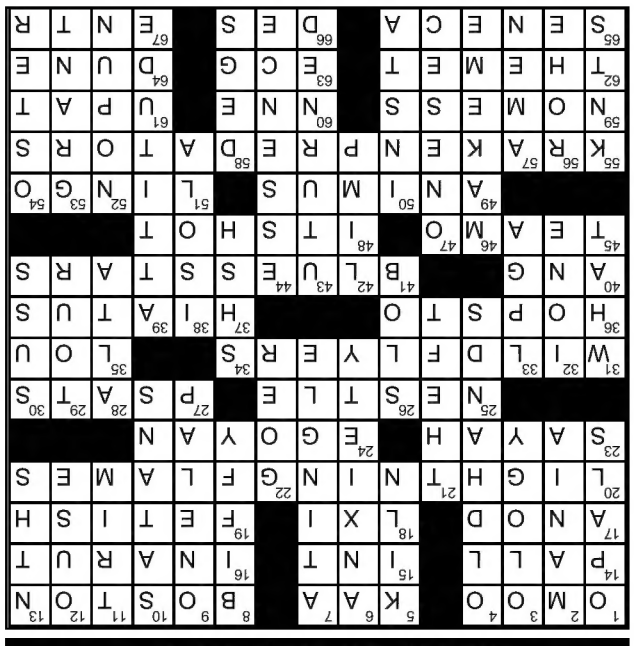
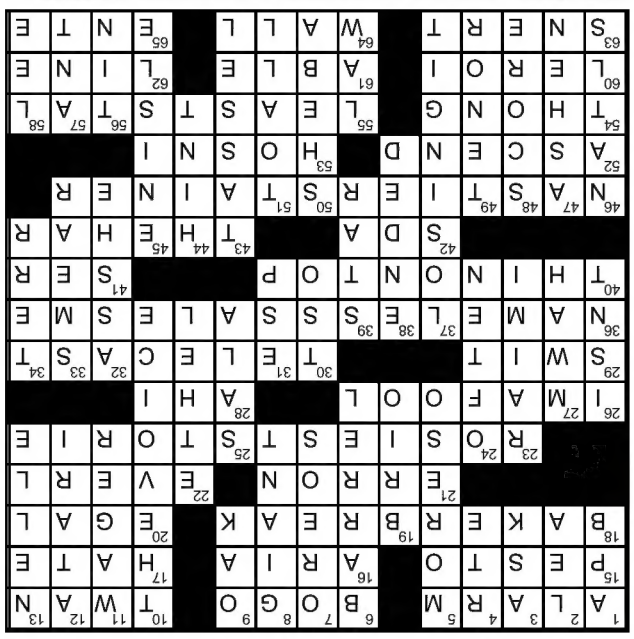


THIS WEEK'S SOLUTIONS



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6	4	7	3	8	1	2	5	9

OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Susan Cobon (nee Dredge)

Resident of Coboconk

Susan Florry Cobon passed away peacefully on December 21, 2025, leaving behind a lasting legacy of kindness, dedication, and profound love for her family, friends, and students. Born on September 11, 1946, in Toronto, Ontario, Susan lived a life rooted in care for others and joy in life's simple, meaningful moments.

In 1956, Susan moved with her family to Calgary, where she attended Elboya Public School. It was there that she met her lifelong best friend, Marjie Brookman, a friendship that would remain close throughout her life. Together, they attended Henry Wise Wood High School. When Susan's father was later transferred back to Toronto, she completed her education at Don Mills Collegiate. Susan went on to attend teacher's college, beginning a vocation that reflected her generous spirit and patience. She taught at Pauline Johnson Public School in Scarborough and, after moving to Lindsay, continued her career at King Albert Public School. Susan was a devoted and caring teacher who touched the lives of countless students over the years, and she remained proud of her profession until her retirement.

Her family was her greatest joy. She was a loving mother to her two children, Carl (Cassandra) and Debra (Jeremy). She was a proud grandmother to Coen and Mitchell, and delighted in the arrival of her newest grandchild, Soleil. In addition to her immediate family, Susan also had many other relatives, cousins, and friends throughout the GTA and Canada. Susan had a deep love for animals, especially the family's many cats, and she held a particularly special place in her heart for their beloved Boxer, Pepper.

Susan found her happiest moments at the cottage on Shadow Lake, her favorite place in the world. There, she could often be found tending to her gardens, swimming in the lake, or enjoying waterskiing. She loved homemade meals, listening to music by The Beatles, Gino Vannelli, and unwinding with her favorite comedy, Seinfeld, along with home improvement and decorating shows. An active and social person, Susan also enjoyed playing tennis with friends and never turned down an opportunity to step onto the court.

Most recently residing in Coboconk, Susan built a life filled with warmth, laughter, and enduring friendships. She will be remembered for her gentle strength, her devotion to those she loved, and her ability to make people feel welcome and valued. Susan will be deeply missed and forever remembered by all who were fortunate enough to know her.

Graveside Service

A Graveside Service in Pine Grove Cemetery will take place in the Spring. Details to be announced. As an expression of sympathy, donations to a charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family. Funeral Arrangements have been entrusted to the **COBOCONK COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME**, 6644 Hwy. #35, Coboconk, ON K0M 1K0 (705) 454-3913.

Coboconk Community Funeral Home

In Loving Memory of

Dora Catherine Foster

(nee Longfield)

March 15, 1940 – January 9, 2026

Passed away peacefully at Haliburton Hospital with her children by her side.

Predeceased by her loving husband Albert (Buck) 2018. She leaves behind her four children, Gary (Lisa), Margo (Kim), Brett and Kay. She also leaves behind her six grandchildren, ten great grandchildren and one great g grandchild. She will also be missed by her sisters Frankie, Susan, Barbara, Jean and Kelly. She will also be missed by many nieces and nephews.

As per Dora's wishes, there will be no service.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Red Wolves Special Olympics (by cheque only) would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

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IN MEMORIUM

Don Hall

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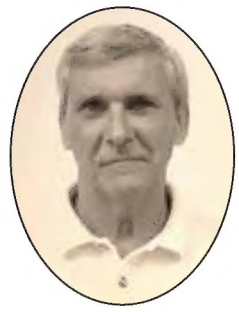
Best Friend who left us January 19, 2011



This day is remembered and quietly kept,
No words are needed, we shall never forget,
For those we love don't go away,
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen and unheard, but always near,
So loved, so missed, and so very dear.

Sadly missed and loved forever!

Eleanor, Stewart, Glenn and Julie
Chris, Andrew, Ryan, Caitlin and Owen
Family and Friends

OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Morrison, Lavern Maxwell "Spark"

Lavern Maxwell Morrison passed away peacefully at Fenelon Court Long Term Care in Fenelon Falls on Sunday, December 28, 2025, at the age of 80.

Lavern, known to many as "Spark," was a resident of Little Britain and the beloved husband of Doris Morrison. He was the loving father of Darryl (Maggie) Morrison of Keswick and Doug (Cheri) Morrison of Sutton. He was a cherished grandfather to Chris (Jenn), Kyle (Jo), Deanna, Alexis (Evan), and Danielle (Jaxon), and a proud great-grandfather to Greyson. Lavern is also survived by his sister, Lyn Boone of Haliburton, her daughters Suzanne (Jeff) Smith and Amy Hollands, and their families. Spark will be dear missed by by his brother-in-laws; Ian Douglas (the late Colleen) of Haliburton, Paul Douglas (Wendy) of Toronto and pre-deceased by the late Peter Douglas (2004).

Private cremation arrangements have been entrusted to the **JARDINE FUNERAL HOME, CREMATION & TRIBUTE CENTRE**, 8 Princes' St. W., Fenelon Falls. A celebration of life will be held in the Spring of 2026.

Lavern had a great love for animals and wildlife. In his honor, memorial donations to the Shades of Hope Wildlife Refuge in Pefferlaw would be appreciated. Contributions can be made online at: https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/142148

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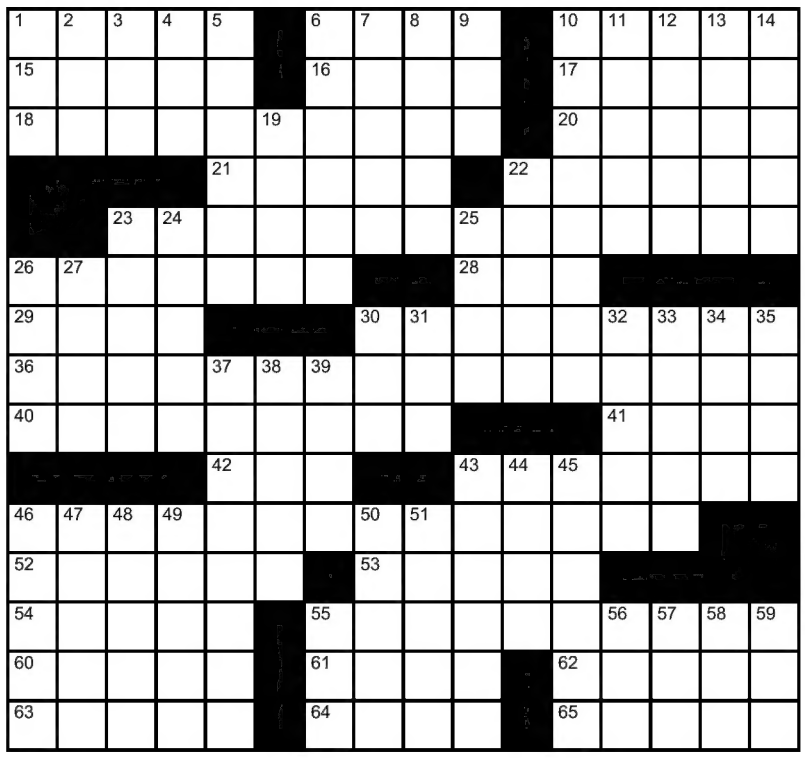

Across

1 Elicit an "OMG!"
6 Twofer sale acronym
10 C&W song sound
15 Basil-and-pine nuts sauce
16 Opera solo
17 Constant critic
18 Lunch hour for a pastry chef?
20 Equal, to Étienne
21 ___ the side of caution
22 "Wake Up Little Susie" brothers
23 Most optimistic tales?
26 "Stupid me!"
28 Tuna type
29 She played Major Houlihan
30 TV programs
36 Marketers with no I.D.?
40 Balding, euphemistically
41 Drier than dry
42 Saturday churchgoers: Abbr.
43 "... Tortoise and ___" (Aesop tale)
46 More mean-spirited wood finisher?
52 Approach cruising altitude
53 Egypt's Mubarak
54 Swimwear for a beach bum?
55 Like the softest bread?
60 The king of la France
61 Competent
62 Written contract top, perhaps
63 "Hägar the Horrible" pooch
64 Spot for an old phone, often
65 4's keyboard neighbour

Down

1 Cops' perp alert
2 ___ & Perrins Worcestershire sauce
3 Put to Quora
4 Major hwy.
5 To a greater extent
6 "Roll out the ___"
7 Black bits in ice cream
8 Like Dahl's peach
9 Grown-up acorn
10 "American Idol" rival
11 Racetrack venture
12 Gaming brand meaning "to hit a target"
13 Harper Lee's first name
14 "___ Anatomy"
19 Vivacity
22 Jughead's pursuer
23 "Spider-Man" series director Sam
24 "Come here ___?" (pickup line)
25 Casa room
26 Doesn't exist
27 "Kisses, dahling!"
30 "General" of Chinese food
31 Medium strength?
32 "Steady ___ goes!"
33 Dirty campaign strategy
34 Part of Y.T.: Abbr.
35 Blade in "The Mikado," for short
37 Flying off the handle
38 Wrapped up
39 First name on movie credits
43 Mortarboard dangler
44 Tinge
45 Isolate, as Napoleon
46 Hi-level competitions: Abbr.
47 Drained of colour
48 Movie music
49 Opera's Ben Heppner, e.g.
50 Biblical Queen of ___
51 "... and ___ a good-night!"
55 Osgoode Hall focus
56 Sn, to chemists
57 Aardvark's snack
58 Cake maker Sara
59 Rock concert plug target, maybe

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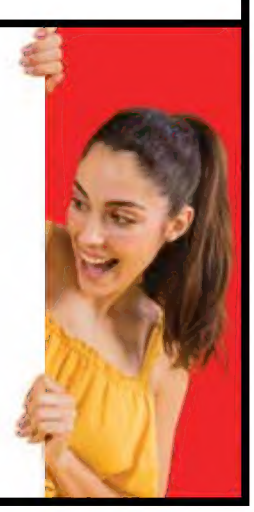

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